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the whole clear and sufficient in regard to the principal points of pronunciation. Some distinctions, in the spelling, require much attention on the part of the reader. For example, he has to be careful about the correct pronunciation of *u*, *ou*, *ou*, *ou*: *u* is (y), *ou* is (u); and *ou* and *ou* are diphthongs, in which *u* has not the (y)-sound, they are to be pronounced (ou) and (ou) with (u) almost equal or near to (w).

The treatment of diphthongs is unsatisfactory. I object to Koschwitz's "weak diphthongs" altogether. He discovers diphthongs in words like *patrio*, *Mario*, *fiho* (p. 24), because the semi-vowel (j) is heard after (i) in those words. Does he think that there is a diphthong in the French word *vie*, when the actor of the Théâtre-Français pronounces (vi:jə), in rhyme, instead of (vi)? What does Prof. Koschwitz understand by "diphthong"? I miss in his grammar a clear and concise definition of this phonetic term.

According to § 16 (pp. 35, 36), *r*, in modern Provençal, is velar and pronounced like the normal (R) of the Parisians, when it is initial, or followed or preceded by another consonant, or double in the spelling, for example, *roso*, *merma*, *frucho*, *terro*; it is also velar, but more or less weak, when it is final, for example, *flour*, *mar*, *discours* (*s* being silent); but it is a dental (r) and trilled à l'italienne, when it is between two vowels, for example, *ero*, *caramel*. Such, or a similar, phonetic confusion, in regard to (r) and (R), really exists in individual pronunciation in Northern France and, also, in other countries, and may be found sometimes among the well educated *Félibres*, Dr. Koschwitz's Provençal friends, whose pronunciation may be supposed to be a little "Parisianized." But as far as my experience goes, the regular or normal *r*-sound, among the ordinary people, in Provence, is, in every case, a dental or lingual (r), more or less trilled à l'italienne according to its position in words or combinations of words; and this sound seems to me to prevail in the French pronunciation of the people, even of the educated classes, *Félibres* or not *Félibres*, in the towns of Provence. Why should they generally use in some words their natural (r), in others the foreign velar (R), when speaking their native language?

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CORRESPONDENCE.

A NEWLY DISCOVERED MS. OF ALISCANS.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*.

SIRS:—Some of your readers may have heard that a newly discovered MS. of *Aliscans* has been published. Inasmuch as the circumstances surrounding the appearance of this volume are mysterious, it might be of service to state a few facts concerning this matter.

No one seems to know who the owner of the MS. is. In fact, he conceals his identity with the greatest care. The published volume bears no name of editor. The printing was done at the Chiswick Press, London, 1903, and the edition is limited to two hundred copies. The price is about one pound ten shillings. Probably the surest firm to write to in an effort to obtain a copy is Bernard Quaritch. The book is beautifully printed, with red letters at the beginning of the laisses. No attempt has been made to edit the MS., for which we may be thankful.

The title of the poem is: *La Chancun de Wil-lame*. The word *Aliscans* does not exist in the poem, which is indeed what its title indicates. The MS. contains 3553 lines, in assonance, with a peculiar variation of the *vers orphelin* at the end of the laisse. The version of this MS. is by far the oldest that we have preserved in any French source. In spite of numerous corruptions which disfigure the language and versification of the poem, it contains several scenes that deserve to rank among the best in Old French literature. A detailed account of the poem will be found in the October number of the *Romania*.

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A NOTE ON THE MIRACLE PLAYS.

To the Editors of *Mod. Lang. Notes*:

SIRS:—In *Mod. Lang. Notes*, VII, 184 (1892), Dr. Davidson called attention to the similarity of parts of the Play of the *Weavers* of Coventry to the corresponding York Play in the following

words: "'The Disputation' of the Weaver's play is the second scene of the York play of 'Christ with the Doctors in the Temple' with a new introduction and a different close." This is not quite accurate. The *Weavers*, now accessible in Holt-hausen's text, *Anglia* xxv, 211, parallels not merely sixteen stanzas of the York "Christ with the Doctors," but the whole play. The "new introduction" is really quite close to York except in a few lines spoken by the Doctors.

The relation of the York Play to corresponding Towneley and Chester plays has already been noticed. Towneley is parallel to only part of the matter common to the other three. We have, therefore, the following complete versions which obviously go back to a common original:

York XX, ll. 1-288 (complete).

Weavers, Part B, ll. 91-413.

Chester XI, ll. 217-316.

If we add to this the Towneley version, which agrees closely with York, we have, as Dr. Hohl-feld has suggested (*Mod. Lang. Notes*, vii, 308), no less than four parallel versions of the same play, or part of a play. The related passages are,

York XX, ll. 73-288.

Towneley XVIII, ll. 49-276.

Coventry *Weavers*, Part B, ll. 161-413.

Chester XI, ll. 233-316.

The latter part of the passage from the *Weavers* and parts of Chester vary from the common subject matter by additions and omissions. There are throughout, however, verbal correspondences sufficient to link the four versions unmistakably together.

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THE PROBABLE SOURCE OF A COUPLET IN HERNANI.

In preparing the notes to my forthcoming edition of *Hernani*, I discovered the probable source of Hugo's famous line put into the mouth of Doña Sol as she tells Don Carlos, who is trying to carry her off by force, that she is a "*filie noble, et de ce sang jalouse*."

Trop pour la concubine, et trop peu pour l'épouse;" ll. 501-02.

The source I refer to is to be found in the Third Part of Shakespeare's *Henry VI*, Act III, Scene II, ll. 97-98, where Lady Jane Gray says to King Edward II:

"I know I am too mean to be your queen,
And yet too good to be your concubine."

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THE EARLIEST OCCURRENCE IN ENGLISH OF THE INDICATIVE IN AN UNREAL CONDITION.

In his *Shakespeare Grammatik*, § 487, Anmerkung 2, Franz remarks:

"Der Konj. Prät. (der nur in *were* eine besondere Form hat) scheint im Konditionalsatz bei Sh. noch nicht durch den Indikativ ersetzt werden zu können, allerdings ist die Form *were* kein absolut sicherer Beweis für den ersteren. Sätze, wie *if he (I) was*, die der gesprochenen Sprache jetzt sehr geläufig sind, werden von Mätzner, *Gram.* II, S. 130 erst bei Sheridan nachgewiesen."

The citation that Mätzner makes from Sheridan is "I suppose you would aim at him best of all, *if he was* out of sight" (*Rivals*, v, 2). *The Rivals*, it will be remembered, was published in 1775.

The indicative, however, is found more than a hundred years earlier than 1775. In the *New English Dictionary*, vol. I, page 717, under *be*, Dr. Murray says that "the indicative form *was* was common in 17-18th c.," and cites from Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, II, 77, under date of 1684, "As if one *was* awake."

There is, however, a still earlier use. In Pepys's *Diary*, under entry of July 12, 1667, occurs this sentence:

"He [the king] comes not to her, nor hath for some three or four days; and parted with very foul words, the King calling her a jade that meddled with things she had nothing to do with at all: and she calling him fool; and told him if he *was* not a fool he would not suffer his business to be carried on by fools."

I quote from Braybrooke's edition (1825), republished by George Newnes, London, p. 594.

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